

# Memorandum

Environmental  
Resources  
Management

3352 128<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Holland, MI 49424-9263  
(616) 399-3500  
(616) 399-3777 (fax)

**To:** Michigan House of Representatives  
Energy and Technology Committee

**From:** Steve Koster, P.E.

**Date:** 9 June 2005

**Subject:** SB 522

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I am testifying in support of SB 522.

As an environmental engineer and principal with Environmental Resources Management, Inc., I led the effort to complete a full Environmental Impact Review of the proposed Wolverine Spartan Pipeline. I also led a multi-disciplinary team that evaluated various alternate routes around and through Lansing.

This evaluation unequivocally indicated that the proposed route, located within a limited access highway corridor, is environmentally superior to all identified alternatives, including four different routes identified by the City of Lansing. The attached chart shows that alternate routes proposed by the City of Lansing:

- are longer, necessitating more disruption
- cross more wetlands and streams
- all cross over the same aquifer as the proposed route
- cross more subdivisions and private parcels
- come near more water wells, with the exception of Lansing's alternative #4, which runs underneath a hardware store, feed mill, and through the town of Dimondale.

Both the MPSC and the MDEQ agreed (in contested case hearings) that the proposed route was superior to alternative routes and the best choice. Please note that MDEQ is required to review alternatives to the proposed project, including impact on drinking water supplies, as stipulated by Part 303 of NREPA (Act 451 of 1994, as amended).\*

\*Part 303 stipulates that wetland permits cannot be issued by MDEQ unless it is in the public interest. The decision "shall reflect the national and state concern for the protection of natural resources from pollution." There are several criteria that must be applied, including "the availability of feasible and prudent alternative locations," the "probable impact on...public health..." and "disruption to aquatic resources" including "protection of subsurface water resources."

## Wolverine Spartan Pipeline Alternatives Comparison of Environmental Impacts

	Approved Route	City of Lansing Alternatives				EIR Alternatives		
		Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Meridian/ I-69	Powerline/ I-69	I-96/ Consumers
<b>Route length (approx. miles)</b>	26	32	29	46	42	23	29	26
<b>Wetlands crossed (feet) (NWI map review)</b>	8,200	16,800	18,900	30,000	32,000	19,500	33,000	8,900
<b>Streams crossed (NWI map review)</b>	10	13	14	20	26	19	16	12
<b>Aquifer crossed</b>	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw	Saginaw
<b>Public and private wells (within _ mile)</b>	562	669	754	614	442	357	719	430
<b>Parcels crossed</b>	<b>Individual Subs</b>	15	174	108	94	N/A	N/A	N/A
	0	15	15	11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Photo by Travis Silvas

**UNAWARE OF POSSIBILITIES** — A proposed alternate route for a gasoline pipeline through Eaton Rapids came as a surprise to city officials as well as Ace Hardware employees. The proposed route would have the pipeline run directly under the Eaton Rapids store. The proposed alternate route is just one of four proposed.

## Pipeline proposal slices through Eaton Rapids

By **KURT MADDEN**  
*Lansing Community Newspapers*

**LANSING** — The city of Lansing has proposed four alternative routes for a 16-inch, high-pressure gasoline pipeline to serve the Lansing area — and one of the proposed routes goes through Eaton Rapids and several

environmentally sensitive areas in Eaton County, according to a spokesperson for the Wolverine Pipeline Co.

The proposals were put forth at a hearing before administrative law judge Richard Lacasse with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) as an alternative to an already-approved route that follows

the 1-69 right-of-way south of Lansing.

The proposals were made during four days of testimony in mid-August, and city of Lansing and the pipeline company must file legal briefs for that hearing by Oct. 2 and a rebuttal to each other's arguments by Oct. 16.

The hearing took place because the city of Lansing

filed an appeal of a MDEQ decision to grant the pipeline a permit to operate the line, and it is one of three fronts in the legal war being waged by Lansing to stop the pipeline from being installed along a four-mile stretch along I-96 in south Lansing.

Several other township

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# Pipeline

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boards have voted to support the pipeline's approved route, including Alaiedon, Delta, Delhi, Windsor, and Watertown townships.

Steven Kostar, an engineer with Environmental Resources Management, said he drove all four routes and came away with a belief that little care was taken in choosing the routes.

"All four proposed routes cross more wetlands, cross more streams, go down two-lane roads with houses, farms and subdivisions on both sides of the road. If the concern was proximity to people's homes, then the proposed routes pose greater dangers than the approved route," Kostar said.

"One proposed route goes through the villages of Dimondale and Onondaga... there are buildings right on top of the routes. It's obvious to me that they (officials of Lansing) did not inspect the routes ... they make no sense."

Tom Shields, a spokesperson for the pipeline company, said the proposal for Eaton County follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way and runs through Eaton Rapids, near the Eaton Rapids water treatment plant and says an Ace Hardware store and a grain elevator set directly above the route.

Ace Hardware store manager Marcus Fenton said he was unaware of the proposal and declined to comment.

The company has analyzed the route proposed by the city of Lansing for Eaton County, and discovered that it is 42 miles long, crosses some 32,000 feet of wetlands, 26 streams and comes within a half mile of 442 private wells in Eaton County, Shields said.

"At this point no officials have contacted us about the alternate route," said Eaton Rapids City Manager Bill LeFevre. "It would be a major concern for us. The problem is that's (railroad) no longer a viable right of

way. There is a lot of private land with homes on it."

The approved route is 26 miles long, crosses 8,200 feet of wetlands, crosses 10 streams and comes within a half mile of 562 private wells.

"I can't believe that they (representatives of Lansing) did their homework on this. They obviously did not drive the route they proposed ...," Shields said.

"The proposals all have two elements in common — they pose far more dangers to the environment, and they are not in the city of Lansing," he added.

Kostar said the largest cause of pipeline ruptures is third-party accidents.

"If you put the pipeline in a rural area of undeveloped land alongside the road, there is a much higher chance of these type of accidents compared to a highway controlled by the Michigan Department of Transportation." The company currently operates a 68-year-old, eight-inch line in Meridian Township, and sought to install a second, larger pipeline along the same route three years ago.

The company withdrew the proposal before the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) because of public criticism that the line would run close to schools, stores, and subdivisions.

Two years ago, the

company proposed a new route along I-96 right-of-way. The plan has been approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation, MDEQ, MPSC, and received the blessing of the Board of Water and Light, which supplies the city with water.

Here is the description of the other routes:

- Use either Holt, Lamb or Harper roads to connect to Waverly Road through Delhi township and then join the I-96 freeway right-of-way where Waverly passes by the freeway;

- Use either Holt, Noble or Linn roads to get to Zimmer Road and proceed north to Coleman Road where it joins the I-69 north of Lansing just south of State Road. This route also includes the possibility of using Hart, Shoeman, or Woodbury roads in northern Ingham County;

- and another route follows M-52 from Stockbridge through White Oak, Leroy, Locke townships, through Shaftsbury or Perry to I-69.

The routes all end at a tank farm just off I-96 in Watertown Township.

*Associate Editor Travis Silvas contributed to this report.*